

Blue Mountain Round-ups

Pat Lynch & Daniel's Ranch

Tape #190

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Joe Haslem (Joe): Well, I think the first thing we should talk about is Blue Mountain. It is unique range country. It wasn't a summer range, it was a range you could control, winter range especially. As we know, Blue Mountain is pretty good-sized country. What country there is, is good country. There is no wasteland to it a-tall, other than what's usable range land. It goes from the Manila Basin, from about 5,000 up there, to about 9,000 or something. It takes so much of it for summer rangeland, so much of it waste, so much timber. That's not good for timber or livestock grazing, it's so thick and brush, it's not usable.

As we know, all of northwestern Colorado is awfully good summer country. The only thing is that a sort of a place to go in the winter. Well, in those days, when I was a kid and before, all northwestern cattle and southern Wyoming used to drift, what they called on a countdown, and come south over from Elk Springs, and they used that area from Elk Springs west to Green River from the canyon country south from White River was all ? and that was all thick ? in those days. They use it now, just like they used the Colorado poets come down here with their sheep. In the early days it was ice and not economical to cross the sheep across the river. They would go along the edge, a little bit on ice and then get back. You couldn't ?. You could train horses and cattle, but you couldn't sheep. And so, in consequence, it was stupid, you might say.

Interviewer(I): Now were these guys from Wyoming and Colorado that came down here?

Joe: Yeah. Yeah. For the sake of it. Old Charlie Evans and Charles ? of the old Willow Creek Ranch and the Cary Outfit used to... The Two Circle Bar and Axel Basin. And they used this for the winter range there. And in my time I have seen C Y and other places come down. So with all the three wagons, there is the Blue Mountain Wagon, either the Seven Wagon or the Two Bar or the Keystone Wagon. You get all three or four wagons come down. The Blue Mountain Wagon started at Jensen and the other wagons would meet them at the K Ranch and then they'd go right on through to Rangely. And then after they got the big shelf ?, they used to send their riders down on the White River and Green River with a pack outfit to get their trailers.

I remember about one of the first big round-ups I ever saw, I think it was the spring of 1912. ? Newt Squires, I know George Watson was running the Seven Wagon and I think Ike Richards was running the Blue Mountain Wagon and I believe Colonel Parker was running the Keystone Wagon. Well, they worked,... you couldn't ... let me get this straight ... let me make it plain: three wagons never come all together, they can't, maybe a quarter or half mile apart. Each wagon had fifteen or twenty men and a long string of horses and a regular string, they cut ? usually these fellows had them a long string, they had ten horses each man, see. A short string is

seven and a long string is ten. But most of them had ten horses. Well, hell, you can't put a 150 head of horses in a rope. They will break them down. You can't catch them and they will break out. And a cook can't handle that many men. So they camp maybe a quarter or half mile apart. On account of the horses.

And those good horses men. Have to take care of the horses, that's all there was to it. The horses had to stay fast, bring those horses in on a walk, put them in there and make them walk. ? you see them in all these pictures going on a lope. The worse thing you ever do, you get a cough. I remember one spring, I think it was the year I got out of the service, 1920, it was a dry year, but we rode the desert and we had to lay over a week, ten days and let the horses get over that cough. Puttin' them horses in a rope till you hear them. They just cough and cough, you know. We had to wait a week for the horses to get over their cough.

That spring, George Watson was one hellva a cow man, he was one of the best there was. And they started those cattle, they just drifted and drifted was all they done. They bunched. They cut these White River and Blue Mountain cattle out then they went all right. But those steers, they just drifted. We got to Elks Springs there and old Watson sent Colonel Parker ahead to Cedar Springs, you know where that is out there by Maybell. He went in there about oh, five or six days to hold up those cattle up. When they bunched there, but nothing but a valley of cattle there. Just nothing but cattle.

Old Ben Morgan, he'd been down in Old Mexico, he used to go down there and buy a lot of cattle from old Tramp?. He was running the Circle Bar there. Well, Old Watson looked every cattle... It was just above Cadillac. Old George said, "How are we going to work it?" Old Ben said, "Gawd damn it, work 'em." They cut that round-up in three bunches, three-arm dumps, and they cut the White River cattle south, the Blue Mountain cattle left, and the Snake River and the Bear River cattle. Hey, hell, they herd the nights.

They herd that cattle a week or ten days, every cowboy, I'm telling you what. No. No. They did not over-graze the country. These sons-of-bitches, BLM and them old-time cowboy men, they were conservationist. They never went on to a place till it was ready to go on. They round-up all they could find, oh, around the 20th of May and up through June, a month or six weeks. Now they put them on for those ranges, oh, the first of April or May and they eat the grass off before it starts. You just can't eat the same grass twice. Then in the winter, that's the reason they had a winter range, they used it when it was winter. There wasn't too much water. Nowadays they make reservoirs and haul water out and everything. They have no control of it. We all thought when the Taylor Grazing Act was all right, but it was like so many of these here government programs, their intentions were good but their executions are hell. That's all there is to it. Right today, anywhere they got water, they make a reservoir...those fellows were natural.

Then they holler about horses. There used to be quite a lot of horses on the range. Horses are a good thing with a bunch of cattle on the range. And I'll tell you for why, you can't make these guys see it, but ponies will move. You have a bunch of ponies in that country and they're getting a little short of feed or something shows up and they'll go to another field. Those steers will follow the ponies. You see what I mean, they broke trails and they pawed. They got by. It just figures, come snow they move that couple all off the water and they make it out. It was just one of those things they went along. That's the way it worked.

That was the way it was until 1919 and '20. That's when they put the really big fear out that time. That hard winter in 1919 and '20, yes, that's when they really put them out. That was

the last time they pulled any wagons down here in ? Creek in 1920 and Willis Johnson pulled a wagon till 1922. That was the last wagons in this country.

There is no story complete about Blue Mountain without Old Pat Lynch. Pat Lynch was an old hermit. Pat was raised in a big family in Ireland. A story he told an old friend of mine, old Henry Shanks: Old Henry Shanks come into the country here in 1900. Pat was born in 1830 in Ireland and he was educated as an apprentice. I don't know what for, but he didn't like what he didn't like, what he was taught for or anything. So he jumped a freighter bound for South America and he got off the coast, and he got hot-headed. I know Pat very well and his old hair, kind of straw, looked kind of "dark white" somehow. He got in a fight with the first mate on that ship and hit him over the head, I don't know what it was, and he jumped the ship overboard from the shore. Well, some natives there picked him up and took him as a prisoner.

Told me a story, he was held out as prisoner for quite a while and they put him in with some Portuguese. These niggers, I guess they got him fastened to a big pole and they were gonna butcher this Portuguese and they took Pat, they told Pat to go out and kill him. Pat said they give him a knife, a sword or something, somehow. He told that Portuguese, he says, "You run and you run like hell and just keep running." And [he] killed a snake or something and got himself all over with blood and they come in and this blood all over him and no Portuguese and they thought him ?? somehow, so they made a regular hero out of him.

He said they give him a red-headed woman. "Evidently there had been some red-haired Irishman there before me." And he lived with his red-headed woman and raised a couple of boys. He stayed there for a few years, then he heard of another boat that was coming and was going to North America. He said [he] come on that freighter up to New Orleans, and come up the river, and then he got in another row on that boat and he cracked somebody else and got thrown overboard , and then he escaped and went to the southwest or Old Mexico.

Well, that was along the time of the Civil War, so he joined the Southwest Calvary, see. He joined that in the name of James Cooper, that's how he got the two pensions. Yeah, he was getting two pensions, one under Pat Lynch and one under James Cooper. Well, he stayed there for several years, then he drifted up into this country and in the '70's he stopped out here north of Vernal, there by the Gibson-Sowards place somewhere. He stayed there a year or so, then they say he walked into Pat's Hole.

Pat had good horses. He went into Pat's Hole and he stayed there maybe a couple of years and then he went down to the southwest again and came back with a string of good horses, some good mares. He stayed in there for several years. But anyway, he lost his marbles. He was an old ?. I think he named his kids [horses] Push and Dryfus 'cause he would eat with you or stay with you and he would always take some food to Push and Dryfus. Down in Echo Park, when you would talk with him up there, you'd holler, you know, and it would echo back. They weren't there. No, they weren't, Push and Dryfus.

Bill Oakley would tell a story on him. Oh, gawd, he was dirty, he was just as filthy as a pig. When he got old, he couldn't afford cartridges and he had two horses and he used to rope the colts and cut their throats, you know. But Bill said he only had starters in there and they were making dry camp, they used to pack water in a can. They were getting dinner and old Pat rode up and they had an old wash dish they had been washin their hands, you know. Pat got down and swilled that old wash water around, Bill [saw him] and said, "Gawd damn it, Pat, don't drink that

water we just washed our hands. (Unintelligible)

Those pig trees that he planted down on Pole Creek there, ? in hell Daniel's Ranch here. Of course, that Daniel's Ranch, a fellow by the name of Snyder that settled that, right under the canyon there. And he was a horse man. The Wells and the Chapmans were all from this Snyder family. In fact, the first white child born in Uintah County was a boy. The girl, Billy Preece married her, was Robert Snyder's widow. They had very good horses and they run on Blue Mountain there and they had a camp there and went by the name of Snyder Seeps. But Penny Murray's cabin ? homesteaded there. When that went dry, that lake over there by the pines, Stuenice [Stewart's?] Ridge, they camped there, but there is a little cold spring right under the mountainside, right where that TV station is, that's where they got a drink of water there. But they had a lot of good horses there.

And then, let me stop and think, I want to get this thing half right. Oh, yeah. There in Daniels he traded a span of ponies. Lake Smith on that ranch and old Aaron's wife died, but they had a little girl that they grewed from when she was a baby and her parents... Old Lady Daniels died, old Ferron, two girls, Rose, she was about 16 years old and he had two boys, Eugene and Lee and some of these Indians over in Lapoint are from that same family. The old lady died a few years ago. Rose Daniels.

Lee Daniels filed on the place down here where Bulleys had ?. He lived there. That was old Lee Daniels' place there, and Gene, he filed there. Then Lee went up into Daniels Wyoming, a little town there, Daniels, it had Green River, it was named after him. Gene had a boy named Ben. After Lee left, Gene moved to Vernal and he went in partners with George Wilson and the old man Ashton and these Ashtons had a bunch of cattle and they run them down there in the Hole there. They banded with the Hackings.

I told you the other day about ?. I'd like to tell you the story on that, how some of those pipes are named.

After Meeks took the outfit over, he bought a couple of mares from old Esli Stewart. Old Esli Stewart had a little old place down here that was formerly homesteaded by old Billie Ainge, Old George Ainge's son. Old George Ainge holds that corner where the lazy river, you know, [where] that trading post is at. That was the old Ainge homestead. And Billie, he homesteaded where Lute Stewart's place was, old Darien Lewis. Old Esli traded a span of horses to bill for that place and the other one was going to trade another span for that and old Man Erie says, "Gawd, no kid of mine is going in debt for the real estate business." He wouldn't let him trade. That was that.

Anyway when Meeks got these two good mares from old Esli Stewart, Esli had a daughter. I guess she was a very charming girl. She was a good dancer, a good singer, a very popular girl. In fact, she died and she was buried where the Jensen Cemetery is, that was the first person buried in the Jensen Cemetery. Her name was Pearl. Pearl Wesley Johnson was named after her. She was a sister to Des and Lute Stewart and all those old fellows. She was a great person. Anyway, those cowboys named those two mares, one Pearl and the other Rocky, see? Of course, a bunch of horses, they'll go up and they will stay with their families, you know a mare and her colt. She got going off over the rim down there in Trail Park. She was gone for a long while and they had a horse round-up and they got this old mare and her family in and this is the way they found her. Oh, she was down over that rim and they name it Trail Park and there was another was another old mare used to go over, by the name of Maudy.